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THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTH.

By A. D. Mayo.

IT is not easy to-day to comprehend the full significance of the revolution in American society inaugurated by the late Civil War. A few of the most obvious effects of the great war are known to all. The complete destruction of the most powerful aristocratic class in Christendom, as far as concerned its direct influence upon national affairs; the abolition of the semi-feudal institution of American slavery, and the elevation of five millions of people, to all the rights of American citizenship; the overthrow of the leading industrial system that had prevailed nearly three centuries, in a country as large as Europe outside the Russian Empire; the bitter struggle, perhaps not yet over, that has accompanied the readjustment of civil, social and financial relations between the two races that people sixteen great states, — these and other results of that tremendous conflict are already apparent to all. But other and less obvious consequences are beginning to appear, in the slowly developing life of the new republic. These changes, revealed or hidden, in the midst of which we live to-day, may be summed up as the radical transformation of an Anglo-Saxon, semi-aristocratic into an American, democratic order of human affairs. Until the breaking out of the war, American society, in the old East and through the entire South, was a gradual broadening of the aristocratic order of British civilization from which it sprung. No less in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, than in Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans, were the claims of superior race, family, inherited wealth, culture and social station acquiesced in, with only a prospect of gradual change. Thirty years ago Emerson said: "Old England extends to the Alleghanies; America begins in Ohio." The emancipation of the southern negro and his recognition as a full American citizen completed the process, begun by the naturalization of the immigrant European peasant in the North, and cast into the trembling balance of national affairs a make-weight which has finally committed the Union to the cause of popular government and republican society.

There are still powerful organizations and influences on the ground that fiercely challenge that result, and threaten new conflicts of these tendencies on new issues. What is implied by the term "Bourbonism" in the South; the concentrated influence of a zealous and able priesthood in more than one division of the American church; the attempt, in certain quarters, to rally the cultivated class, by a sort of literary Free-masonry, to distrust in American ideas; the affectation of narrow cliques, in all social centres, to bring in the European ideal of a superior social caste; the prodigious and rapid centralization of vast industrial interests in the grasp of gigantic corporations, — here is certainly a counter current, not to be overlooked and n without great influence, either for w some restraint or mischievous ob tion. But, however protracted ma the struggle, and however numerous changes of scenery in the shifting dra of the future, no thoughtful man ca long doubt on which side the victory wil rest. For evil or good, the democratic idea is bound to prevail in American affairs. That idea is not communistic, anarchical or subversive of inevitab gradations in society. It is the progre sive reconstruction of human affa around the idea that every human bei shall have fair opportunity to deve what has been given him by his Ma with the corresponding obligation t every human being is bound to use superiorities and successes for the up ing of all. Said Lord Napier to a tinguished American clergyman, fc years ago, "Great Britain is on the sar

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inclined plane as the United States. You are only a little farther down the grade than we." The complete outcome of the American experiment in our New World will be the emancipation of mankind through every nook and corner of the inhabited earth. We can baffle, embarrass, and complicate the movement through its entire progress. We can plunge this continent into new and bloody wars. We may so hinder the preparation of the "common people" for their future dominion, that the rule of the many shall become the dominion of a mob, only mitigated by the stolid resistance of the select minority. But if we bear ourselves in wisdom and patience, the coming in of the people's day will not be the sunset of liberty, but the sunrise of a nobler social order than has yet been known to mankind. One of the logical results of this condition of affairs is the theme of the present essay.

When I speak of "The Woman's Movement in the Southern States" I encounter the risk of a varied misapprehension. The enthusiastic advocate of "Woman's Rights" may fancy I am about to announce a grand rally to the standard of woman suffrage, and all things inscribed on that banner, among the southern sisters. A "stalwart" politi-an may suspect that I am about to ul the existence of a far-reaching iracy among the mothers of sixteen s to train their offspring for another against the Union. The summer rrespondent, whose knowledge of south-rn womanhood is confined to the observation of the crowd of handsome lady loungers on the piazzas of southern watering places, may query whether there is any "movement" at all in these slum-rous realms of "good society." Yet hers may think I am to tell the won-ous story of a resurrection into superior manhood among the freedmen and oor white trash." It is concerning ne of these specially, though of some-ng including them all incidentally, that rite.

I am not speaking on this delicate me "as one having authority," although have seen many things. A northern an, Puritan by descent, aristocratic in the grain, with liberal democratic and cosmopolitan theories in religion and public affairs, educated by thirty years in Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio, I never had an intimate acquaintance with one woman of southern birth until a dozen years ago, and had scarcely travelled in the South until "called" on the ministry of education in which I have been engaged for the last twelve years. But my opportunities during these years for looking into southern society as it is being shaped by the generation of young people born since the opening of the Civil War have been, perhaps, unusual, certainly very widely extended. That overlook includes a perpetual journeying through all these states during the entire school year, with constant public addresses, inspection of southern schools of all grades, entertainment in the homes of every class, frequent preaching in the churches of all denominations, with the friendly personal confidences of great numbers of representative men and women. And, without changing a single feature of my theory of American society and with no consciousness of having been swerved from the right line of fidelity to fundamental American principles by the friendliness of these people, I have come to a few conclusions possibly novel to some of my readers, but welcome surely to every one who rejoices in the name of American woman.

Perhaps there was never a more complete ignorance of the actual condition of society between two sections of the same country than between our northern and southern states for a generation previous to the late war. Whatever of intimate commingling had existed in the earlier days of the republic had almost passed away in the growing estrangement that came of the continued exasperation of the slavery controversy. The northern people who travelled South were chiefly of the sort who sympathized with southern institutions, and saw only the sunny side of that land. Our white southern visitors were entirely of the ruling class, on errands of business, pleasure, or politics, commonly the guests or associates of their special northern friends. Mutual distrust and misapprehension ruled the

hour. Slavery was a picturesque drop-curtain, which shut away the real condition of the southern people from the North as completely as its prototype before the stage.

Among these figures, the southern woman of the ruling class (for the North saw no other) was prominent. The ordinary idea of this type of American womanhood, even among the masses of intelligent people of the North, was a woman of tropical nature, with fascinating person and manners, a despot in society, often eccentric and imperious after the style of the "leading lady" on the stage, averse to labor, contemptuous of self-support, listless and tempestuous by turns, a tyrant among her slaves, and a fury in sectional politics, the most influential factor in the impending war. And still, although the past twenty-five years has virtually thrown open the southern states, and the entire region from Washington to Texas swarms with winter tourists, the old notion dies hard. I am asked a dozen times a week, by excellent people, in all parts of the North, if I do not find the southern women filled with bitterness over the results of the war, and if the southern girl of the period is not that contradictory nondescript, at once a listless, shiftless, superficial butterfly of society, and an artful conspirator against the peace of the nation. True, I have noticed that whenever two young women of similar capacity, culture, and social status are brought together, from Massachusetts and South Carolina, a new mutual admiration society is imminent. The most enthusiastic crowd that an elderly gentleman can pilot through the glories of Back Bay, Bunker Hill, Faneuil Hall, Concord, and the Harvard campus is the flock of bright southern girls which every season brings on its flight to our northern summer schools. Still, the average New England or western community obstinately holds on to the picture of the southern woman painted on the drop-curtain, and half suspects a northern man of being the victim of a sentimental craze, who ventures to tell the story of the new woman's movement at the South as it looks to unprejudiced though friendly eyes. I do not pretend to know all about these matters of which I write, — and many a southern woman might honestly believe me wrong in my diagnosis of southern social affairs; but I do know more than the majority of my northern friends.

It should be said, in the first place, that the popular northern idea of the southern woman of the leading class, before the war, was largely evolved from the realm of romance. That the superior woman of the South was characterized in those days by the early development of personal charms, a winning social grace and friendliness, and an ambition for social superiority in that concentrated her education on social culture, was doubtless true. But the notion that the leading class in the South was distinguished by superior descent or eminent culture from a similar class in the old northern states was untrue. The best "old families" of both sections came from similar original British stock, — the great intelligent, progressive middle class that has created the new republic and reconstructed the Great Britain of two centuries ago.

The opportunities afforded by foreign travel and education of the ordinary American type for girls half a century ago, for the growth of fine womanly qualities among these classes, was very evenly distributed through the states east of the Alleghanies. While the southern schools for girls were sufficiently numerous and well-appointed to meet the ordinary demand for the education of the young woman of the better class — the only woman who was schooled at all — and many of the more favored girls were sent North or to Europe for better training; yet, on the whole, the "female seminaries" of the old North, imperfect as they may have been, were the better of the two, and the average of book-learning and the scholarly habit more marked among the young women north than south of Washington.

Yet the southern woman of thirty years ago was just what the woman of New England, Pennsylvania, or New York would have been, had her grandfather removed to Georgia or Texas, and had she been reared amid the influences of the southern country life of that remote

era. The North saw our southern sister at the most and least attractive angles of her life, — as the brilliant idol of society, and as the listless victim of an indolence largely the result of enervating climate, unwholesome habits of living, and the demoralizing environment of a servile class. But the southern woman the North did not see was of the same essential type it loves and honors at home. On a thousand lonely plantations, often in unwholesome and discouraging surroundings, born into a state of society from which no woman could escape, the majority of the planters' wives and daughters bore themselves, in those old days, with the same womanly devotion, intelligence, quiet energy, and daily self-sacrifice that everywhere characterized the superior American woman of the past generations.

Indeed, while all the advantages of slavery were monopolized by the negro savage, who was changed by two centuries of servitude into the "American citizen of African descent" we beheld in 1865, and while the aristocratic man of the South did seem to reap undeniable results in the enjoyment of personal, social, and political power, the heavy end of that lot was always lifted by the woman. The Christian wife and mother could not but look with silent dismay down into the black, bottomless gulf of temptation that yawned below the cradle of every boy. Her husband's slaves were a mob of half-civilized children, always under her feet, and her life at home, with many redeeming attractions, was a daily service of toil, anxiety and often, half-hopeless effort to hold things together and do her full duty as mistress of the mansion. The prevailing idea of womanhood forbade her to step out upon a multitude of paths open to her sister of the North. To teach, to engage in any industrial calling of self-support, except on the compulsion of dire necessity or from the impulse of genius, was not for her. No rage for religious speculation tumbled the placid waters of her country church, and the Protestant clergy had practically as thorough control of her education as the Catholic priesthood assumes for the young women of their flocks to-day.

That such a life, with its peculiar romance and excitement, was a powerful stimulus to deep thought and brooding sentiment, giving to the character of the southern woman that undertone of pathos and intensity that still hangs about her like the sad and almost tragic refrain of her whole life, we can easily understand. That it developed a type of woman most powerful in her hold upon the men of her own section, and, as she comes to be better known, destined to be more largely influential than ever before in the national life, we cannot doubt. The finest fruits of aristocratic society are always garnered by the best women. The South, before the war, was rich in excellent women who, like their sex everywhere, committed body and soul to their own order of social affairs, were the most precious of the manifold treasures of that mysterious land.

Said a northern soldier's wife:

"I lived a while, during the war, in a camp of Confederate prisoners, as the wife of the commander of the post, whose duty it was to open the letters that came to these men from their families and friends. As I looked at the photographs of women that came in these letters, I couldn't wonder that these men were ready to fight to the death under the powerful spell of those eloquent faces and flashing eyes."

We are hearing great things nowadays, and I have seen in my numerous visitations, something of the vast mineral treasures of the South, almost undiscovered before the year 1860, now promising to surpass the richest deposits in any land. But the one mine from which the South will gather pearls beyond price, in the upward lift to its enlarging destiny through the years to come, is the marvellous treasure-house of its young womanhood, — in the days of the mothers hidden from the nation by the drop curtain of slave society, now opening, in the deeper realms of life, moving to its rightful influence and its own peculiar place in the American sisterhood to whom we look for the redemption of the land.

The great broom of war swept the eleven seceding states of the South almost clean of effective white manhood through four awful years. For the first time in the history of these states, the white

women of every class were left in virtual possession of the home life. The South, in 1860, was a vast, sparsely populated country, with but one great city south of Washington, the superior people dispersed through the quiet plantation life of the old *regime*. There, far from the alarm of invasion, the vast majority of these women, through four terrible years, carried in their arms the entire home life of these states; not only bearing the burdens so nobly assumed by their northern sisters, the management of children and the work for the soldier in camp, field, and hospital, but, in large measure, occupied by the management of more than four million slaves, in a state of wild suppressed expectancy such as only they could comprehend. How wonderfully well they went through that awful period; how, day by day, their faculty of administration grew apace; how they thought and pondered and wept and prayed and suffered on, thousands of the best of them in the grip of relentless poverty,— all this was veiled from us. What we did hear was the very obvious fact that the woman, South, even, beyond her sister in the North, was a flame of fire in the cause she had been educated from her cradle to believe was the cause of God, and that its overthrow would involve the destruction of all good things given to her in this world.

And the strange thing, even yet not fully comprehended by many of our sisters of the South, is that no schooling less stringent than the frightful ordeal of a destructive civil war, which virtually exhausted the life of an entire generation of women, could have brought the woman of the South up to the threshold of the magnificent opportunity on which her foot is planted to-day. Neither we nor she could have seen how, beyond the smoke and dust of war, the glory of the Lord was on its way for her deliverance, and that the downfall of the cause for which she so bravely gave her life was to be the signal for an uplift of which she had never dreamed.

For the one thing needed by the southern white woman, of every class, a generation ago, was emancipation from the spell cast over her executive energies by the very constitution of society into which she was born. With an excess of chivalric devotion to women, that to our cooler northern temperament appears almost romantic, the southern man, in the old time, never fully understood that the most genuine worship of woman is shown by the large appreciation of her nature and her place in the modern world and the ready offer of the helping hand in every honest and womanly effort to do her best for her country and mankind. Chivalry, always the same in essentials, flowers out in varied expression from age to age. The knight of five centuries ago, in Europe, was a stalwart brother, clad in cumbrous brass or sheathed in shining steel, ready to break his own heart or crack his rival's head in behalf of a blooming damsel who could probably neither read nor write, but whom he adored as "queen of love and beauty." The American knight of to-day is a fine young fellow in citizen's dress, who gives his hand, with his heart and his pocket-book in it, to his little sister, his pretty cousin, or his youngish maiden aunt, saying, "Go, dear, to the university and study to your heart's content, — and when you come home with your diploma in your reticule, we'll crown you queen of love and beauty and princess of light." It is beginning to be understood among the noblest women of the South that in no way save by the complete wreck of the old order could the young woman of to-day be found, like the wise virgin, with lamp trimmed and burning, awaiting the bridegroom, — the woman's "calling and election" in the "grand and awful time" which our eyes behold.

The slaveholders of the South, in 1860, did not number the present population of Boston, and the entire body of people personally interested in the institution could hardly have amounted to three of the eight millions of the white people of the South. That class, in 1860, was the most powerful aristocracy in Christendom. It ruled the American republic, plunged the nation into a civil war, and almost swung the two foremost powers of Europe over to itself. In 1865, that body of people was more com-

pletely overwhelmed than any similar class in modern times. Not only was its political domination in national affairs forever gone, but it was reduced to almost absolute poverty, without the severe industrial executive training that makes poverty the lightest of all burdens for the young man and woman of the North. Not one in ten of these old respectable families has emerged from this financial wreck, or will ever stand again on its feet in the old way. Of course, the woman bore the cross in this complete prostration of loftiest hopes. In 1865, many thousands of the women of the leading class of the South were left with a less hopeful outlook for the life of comfort and household ease so dear to every woman than multitudes of the servant girls that swarm the pavements of our northern towns on the evening of a summer day.

But to another class of southern women this experience came in another way. Far more numerous than the throng of suffering women of the better sort was the great crowd of the wives and daughters of the non-slave-holding white man. Under this class, minus the fringe of "poor white trash," the tramps of the South in all but their lazy determination not to tramp, must be included a variety of people, from the reckless woodsman in the pine forests of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast, through the vigorous farmers of the Piedmont realm, over among the two million dwellers in the interminable mountain region, as large as Central Europe, that extends from Harper's Ferry almost to within sight of the lovely capital of Alabama.

Of the white women of these various classes we at the North knew nothing — and know very little to-day. That many of them were ignorant, often vulgar and weak in their womanhood, living in strange discomfort, we have been told, with variations, by the omniscient metropolitan reporter, by the omnipresent drummer and, later, by the novelists of the South, who have penetrated to their homes. But the other side of the story has not been told. These people are almost wholly of the original British stock that peopled the New England and the Middle States, radically kind and confiding, their vices and follies rather the faults of neglected children than of the depraved class that is the terror of our great American towns. Hence we need not be surprised to learn that to this class the war brought a great era of emancipation and found in it a people ready to step out into the light before the country.

The first result of peace was to bring multitudes of the men of this class forward as buyers and owners of better lands than they could obtain under the old order of affairs. All over the South, especially on the beautiful slopes and in the vast mountain regions, we see the rising homes of these new folk. We meet their boys in all the growing villages. They swarm in Texas. The city of Atlanta, has almost been created by them, with Senator Joe Brown as their "best man." In the schools for girls, these shy, awkward, shut-up maidens are carrying off the prizes and going forth as teachers. They are the "factory girls" in the new cotton mills, and are ready to work, as they are taught, in the various ways by which thousands of American women are earning honest money. If I were twenty years younger, I would go in, as a missionary of the education of the head, the heart, and the hand, at Harper's Ferry, and only come out for supplies, till not only was my hair gray, but my head bald, and I ready to embark on the long journey to the Beyond. One of the noblest of the good women teachers of North Carolina, who established a school for girls in the chief town in that wonderful upland world of the old North State, writes:

"The prospects for my boarding-school for the more favored young ladies of the vicinity are excellent. But oh, for money, money, money, to educate the poor, dear ignorant girls of this glorious mountain land!"

What can be done with the children, even of the lowest class of this sort, the "trash" of the coast country, may be known by sitting on the platform of Amy Bradley's Tileston school, in Wilmington, North Carolina, and looking into the faces of four hundred of them, — as fair to look upon as our own little New Eng-

land boys and girls. Our North is rich in the honors of philanthropy; but no work done for the uplift of the children will shine with a brighter record than the twenty-five years' service of Amy Bradley, a Boston schoolmistress, in the draining of the Wilmington "Dry Pond," through the steady financial backing of Mrs. Mary Hemenway, who, not content with her gift of $125,000 for the education of the poor of that locality, and her munificence to the colored folk at Hampton Institute, has now built on even broader foundations, in her school of elementary learning and industrial arts in a suburb of Norfolk.

And what of the negro women — the three millions of them between the Potomac and the Rio Grande? What has emancipation and a generation of freedom done for them? For the vicious, weak, and foolish, what liberty always does at first for an enslaved race — barring the ferocity that always flares out from a similar emancipated class in the lower regions of European life. Let us not forget that our Freedman is the latest comer who knocks at the door of the world's new civilization. The colored ancestry of the most civilized of these people dates back less than three hundred years; while probably a third of them would find their grandfathers of a century ago in the jungles of the Dark Continent. Among these women are as many grades of native intellectual, moral, and executive force, to say nothing of acquirements, as among the white people. The plantations of the Gulf, the Atlantic Coast, and the Mississippi bottoms swarm with negro women who seem hardly lifted above the brutes. And I know a group of young colored women, many of them accomplished teachers, in Washington, D. C., who bear themselves as gently and with as varied womanly charms as any score of ladies in the land.

The one abyss of perdition to this class is the slough of unchastity in which, as a race, they still flounder, half-conscious that it is a slough, — the double inheritance of savage Africa and that one hateful thing in slavery for which even good old Nehemiah Adams could find no excuse. But here things are mending, — a good deal faster than the average southern man will allow, though all too slow to justify the fond enthusiasm of those elsewhere who only know the negro as the romantic figure in the great war, and the petted child of the Christian church in the North and foreign lands. I have looked upon many thousands of these girls, in the schools established by the splendid philanthropy of the North and in the local public schools of the southern country; and I am sure that in the midst of this wild, weltering sea of unstable womanhood is slowly forming a continent of pure, honest, Christian young women, who have before them a nobler mission field than the women of any civilized land, in the redemption and training to personal morality of their sisters of the South.

For here is the fulcrum over which any lever that would lift the younger colored people must pry. No readjuster politician, preaching a gospel of repudiation; no clamor for the right to eat and sleep and ride and study in the same place as the white man; no craze for the higher education, or any device of mental or industrial culture that leaves out of account the foundations of a solid and righteous life; no ecstasy of sentimental or passional religion that floats away soul and sense in a deluge of muddy emotion; nothing but the severe training of more than one generation of these colored girls in the central virtue of womanhood can assure the success of this entire region of American citizenship. Until the colored woman has her feet securely planted on that rock, all that any or everybody can do for her race is like treasure flung into an abyss. As she gains on that path, all good things will come to her and hers. The radical disability of the negro to-day is the fatal disability of a feeble morality. In all else, though not an imitation white man, notably no revised edition of the Anglo-Saxon white man, he has a wealth of nature and a speciality of gifts that will bring him out one of the most useful and, by all odds, the most picturesque of the characters in our manifold American life.

And now, how are these women of the

South, the various grades and classes of them, bearing themselves at the opening of the great day of woman's destiny through these states of the Southland? For we need not fancy that the southern woman, of any class, is going back to the place where we saw her a generation ago. The old places have passed away. She cannot be the same Lady Bountiful on the plantation; she cannot queen it, as of old, in Washington, or be the same kind of southern portent abroad, the same "low-down" white woman of the mountains, the same slave mother, even the same reckless companion of the white man's folly, as in the days gone by. There are plenty of women in all these states who do not know this; who will still pine for what is forever gone, or wreck themselves in frantic struggles after what can never be to them what it was to their mothers, even if obtained. But in any thoughtful estimate of womankind we must leave out the conventional sisterhood, foolish or respectable, that never looks beyond the hour and drifts, like one of the great flowery grass-islands of the shallow bayou. When we write of the southern woman's movement, we mean the movement of all women in the South who "having eyes, see, and having ears, hear," and having souls welcome the call of God and go forth, ofttimes under a cloud of local prejudice, but more and more coming to be known as the leaders of the higher society in every state. How are these young women meeting the call? What is of far more importance to some of us, what can the women of the North do to help them in these toilsome early years?

The South of to-day is still an all-outdoors country, as large as Europe outside of Russla, its eastern slope and southwestern empire in some ways contrasting like our own East and West; yet its oldest states, like Virginia and the Carolinas, in many important respects a border-land, to be waked up and thoroughly populated, in the same manner as our new Northwest. In all these states, leaving out half-a-dozen border cities, there is but one town of metropolitan dimensions and character, — New Orleans; a dozen others, some of historic importance, others of recent growth, of fifty thousand and upwards, and a larger number of between five thousand and twenty thousand; in all, not so many people gathered in proper city life, in the thirteen states below the border, as in New England. The vast majority of the superior families of the South still abide in a quiet country or village life which, in all save cheapness of living, is below that of the corresponding region in any northern state in the opportunities for personal culture and diversified industry, so valued by our American young women of ability and spirit.

Through these vast areas, in all these states, common schools have been established, chiefly since 1870, better than ever were thought of before, but in most places outside the larger towns, lamentably ineffectual to meet the needs of the people. School districts five miles square, — such muddy miles in winter, such blazing miles in summer; log or indifferent frame schoolhouses, with all sorts of substitutes; teachers, paid twenty dollars, thirty dollars, possibly forty dollars a month, and "find themselves" for a term of three to four months in the year in the Gulf region, from four to five elsewhere; the absolute separation of the races in all schools controlled by the southern people; — these drawbacks to education in the country bear heavily on the white girl.

The agricultural life of all these states is improving; but a plantation in central Georgia or a stock-farm in southeastern Texas is about the slowest coach in which an ambitious American woman can be "booked" for her life journey. The bright young men are flying from this life in crowds. They cannot be expected to stand by the "old folks at home" and fight out the battle of their changing system of labor, when every growing county town, little city, and, especially, the rising empire beyond the Mississippi are beckoning them to the rewards of active enterprise. One of the chief hindrances to the rapid change of southern country life is this drifting away of the young men, who would naturally become the leaders in all progressive things, leaving on the ground so many of

the unenterprising, vicious, idle youth, who have only vigor enough to stand up to the home crib and eat their fill. So, more and more, with notable exceptions in every state, the country, which was the stronghold of the old southern society, is left to the negroes, the poorer white men who come in and buy or rent the farms, and the women of the old families, who must stay where there is a house to cover and a granary to feed the home flock. Into such a life as this, bereaved of so many influences, outside the home enjoyed by the young women of other portions of the country, myriads of southern girls are born; and there they must stay, unless they develop an energy of which the most enterprising girl is not always capable, to push out, get a fair education from a neighboring academy, contriving meanwhile to get money enough to meet reasonable demands for dress, and the little outings that vary the monotony of the home. There are few of the avenues for industrial success open which invite the northern woman who would care for herself. Such occupations imply a concentrated population, with money to spend and a growing taste for expensive living. To a limited extent a portion of these girls are occupied in the old style "fancy work," which is sold in the cities. Some of them go to the towns and find occupation in the ordinary wants of a village of a thousand to five thousand people, where every avenue of domestic labor and the rougher outdoor labor is occupied by colored women, the abler of whom are making their way into occupations that are monopolized by respectable white women through the North.

At present, the one broad avenue out of this quiet country life is school-teaching. Here the young women of the better class are rapidly coming into almost complete possession. The young men fit for this work are largely seeking other and more lucrative employments. The average boy of twelve, even in the cities, leaves school, at least to begin to play "little man," and keep the wolf from the door. The daughters of the humbler white families, with increasing exceptions, are unfit for this work, save in remote localities and ignorant districts. So these young women of the old plantation families, a generation of whom have come up since 1860, are now, under the supervision, often merely nominal, of a limited number of "superintendents," teaching the new public schools of the South. In places where the colored youth are not up to the work, they are in the negro schools, in Baltimore and Charleston largely in the ascendant.

It would awaken the most indifferent to a lively sympathy, to see how thousands of these young women are toiling for the moderate education that will fit them for this work, as well as to obtain the ordinary culture of a woman in good society. The most enterprising girl of a numerous household will, in some way, get together the one or two hundred dollars for which a year's schooling can be had in one of the academies that dot the country at intervals all over the South, and were the only schools of the mothers. Many of them were overthrown, but have been largely re-established, mostly without endowments, often with good teachers, working on meagre wages, the authorities turning every way to handle the crowd of eager applicants who often, not able to face the moderate expense, are willing to pledge their future for any assistance. In one of these schools this good girl, probably overworked, often does a remarkable amount of solid study in a short time, leaving when the funds give out. Their wisest teachers speak of the constitutional sensitiveness of great numbers of these young women, the inheritance of a generation born in a revolutionary period, as a serious drawback to the intense and prolonged effort they attempt to make. This girl goes home to take the neighborhood school, or finds a better place elsewhere, and uses her little earnings to pay her debt or pull up her sisters below, the whole family being harnessed to her, till the load is drawn, the harness breaks, or the brave daughter marries and is relieved by the next in turn.

Under this pressure, in country and city, very early marriages, into which the element of support largely enters, are inevitable. However social philosophers may deplore what they are pleased to call

the American decline of marriage, and however hateful may be the social rot of easy divorce, we are inclined to think that the evil resulting from these very early marriages of immature, half-educated girls — with the fearful break-down of health and happiness, including its reflex action on the masculine South — is a yet more serious social portent than frequent divorce, which all thoughtful Christian people deplore. Be that as it may, when the Southern people are for the first time getting upon the ground a system of education for the masses, it is little short of a providential interposition that so large a proportion of the choice young women of sixteen states are thus brought into the profession of instruction. To realize this fact we must imagine the entire wealthy and cultivated class in a northern state suddenly reduced to almost absolute poverty and the foremost young women of these families driven for a livelihood to teach in country district, village, and city schools, with the ladies of rich, well-known families, employed in the seminaries of secondary instruction. It brings the finest culture and the consecrated young womanhood of the South into direct contact with the masses of children, — a beautiful "object lesson" in the divine way of lifting up the lowly and binding "all sorts and conditions" together by an enduring social bond.

Fifteen years ago, these schools were largely taught by elderly men and women who had lost their all, and were qualified only as the ordinary woman or man of a superior class may be for this difficult work. But now the younger women are coming in; and by their prodigious efforts to attain academical education, their attendance in multitudes on the summer institutes now held in all the states, in exceptional cases by visitation to the North at vacation schools, they are rapidly preparing themselves for this good work. A more attractive, inquisitive, "plucky" crowd of young women is not to be found in this or any country. They are doing more valuable work for the children, under greater hindrances, for smaller pay, than any class of women anywhere.

Outside of this, there is coming up in all the prosperous southern cities a moderate interest in opening new industrial avenues for white women. In every one of them there is the nucleus of an association, and in most of them an active society of ladies for the encouragement of home work, which will possibly grow into a school for artisans. Few of these movements have reached an influential stage of development, and the girls wishing to fit themselves as teachers in such ways must still rely to a large extent upon instruction from without.

Just below this class is coming up, in some portions of the South, a crowd of the daughters of the poorer white people of the hill and coast country, to cooperate in this educational work. Some of the girls' seminaries that I have visited are largely filled with this class of students. With all sorts of drawbacks, often with lack of health and home culture in manners, and with no previous habits of application, they yet show no fatal lack of ability. Indeed, many of the finest pupils in all these schools are from such homes. One young woman, to whom it was my office to present a prize for superior scholarship in English literature, at the end of two years' schooling had written a critical essay on one of Shakespere's plays which brought another testimonial, from the Shakespere Society of London. Yet this fine student was preparing to go back to her mountain home, to teach on the poor wages of the village school, to repay her brother the loan for her own education, his only opportunity for a two years' outing. My life for a dozen years past has been lived among such experiences as this, and I have come to realize, almost with a flaring up of fiery indignation, the supreme folly and intolerable selfishness of the awful luxury and wasteful expensiveness that confronts me on coming homeward to the great centres of social recreation, after three-fourths of every year passed amid such longing for the bread and water of life. The women of our country have it in their power to educate every good girl thus struggling for the knowledge which must be the outfit for self-supporting woman-

hood, by giving the margin that, beyond all reasonable claim for comfortable and even elegant living, now goes over into the social abyss.

The great want of the better sort of colored young woman for the elementary schooling and industrial training which will make her an effective teacher, a worker in the church, a leader in the society of her people, and a Christian wife and mother, is being supplied by a group of admirable schools, largely supported by northern funds, though partly by tuition fees paid in money or in labor. Money judiciously given for student aid to these schools goes to a good place. A great work could be done in southern cities by establishing an annex to the public schools for the training of large numbers of colored girls in home industries, skilled housekeeping and the many ways of getting a living now opening to them. In every community there are bright graduates from the schools, from worthy families, who, leaving their studies at twelve or fourteen, have nothing to do but hover about a crowded country home, swarm the town pavements, and fall away under such temptations as beset all who live in this style. If these girls could be offered a thorough training of a year in a good school of housekeeping, or the many trades and industries by which a young woman can live, the present fearful condition of southern household service would be reformed, these children saved from abject poverty, shiftlessness, and impurity, and a great many would all the time be marching out of the slough of despond toward the uplands of a wholesome social life. A plant of a few thousand dollars in any southern city would purchase and furnish a suitable house among these people, where a good white or colored woman could live, making it a model home, receive her classes, train her pupils in practical home-making and, as opportunity offered, introduce new departments, till it became a centre of the better life to the whole aspiring class in the town. If a northern woman with tact and common sense, she could interest the best of the Christian workers of the town in her enterprise, and there might be awakened a new understanding and sympathy between the good working women of both sections. Thanks to a few noble women and the wise administration of the public school system of Washington, D. C., this feature of the education of these people is now being rapidly developed there — though still far from sufficient to meet the dire necessity. We must do a prodigious amount of such work during the next twenty years, or by and by we shall have a black slough at the bottom of American society whose malaria will taint every palace and make republican government a chronic conflict. It would be best that some of these industrial homes should not be under the control of churches or connected with private or public schools, but be independent centres of good living, attracting by their own merits. These homes should at once be established, on a large scale, in every considerable southern city. Each of these towns is now educating a large number of bright young colored girls, who are all the time exposed to the demoralizing influence of the multitude of idle and vicious negroes, the pest of southern society. The time is at hand when only a thorough system of vagrant laws, with truant schools, possibly compulsory industrial schooling, will save the cities and villages of all these states from the unendurable nuisance of becoming a paradise for all the drift of every color and condition in the South.

Anybody can run out these lines of thought, and conjecture the result of this sympathetic movement of the Christian women of the country toward the thousands of young white women in the South, who need all that can be offered — all the more because they are not asking for themselves. And it does not require the imagination of a Zola to portray the result of letting the daughters of these millions of emancipated slaves come up ignorant, vulgar, lazy, the great American sewer under the back windows of every respectable home.

All that any wise and loving woman hopes for her sex in the new republic is hoped and prayed for by thousands of young women in the South. For good or evil, the woman of the South has

made an irretrievable forward movement in the past thirty years. She must be the most influential factor in the upper realm of the new southern life. The home, the school, the church, the lighter industries, literature, art, and society will be her preserve. What she makes the new South, our children will find it, a generation hence. Shall they find it another hostile land, threatening new revolutions, or shall it be to them a land of welcome and of patriotic union with all that is best and most precious at home?

But why, somebody may ask, talk to us of these things? Cannot the women of Texas and Louisiana and Alabama take care of themselves, bring up their own families, educate their sons and daughters, live in their own way without our help? Have we not enough to do here in New England, New York, in the West, and beyond the mountains, to keep the northern end of the Union from going to the bad, that we must be burdened with this record of the trials, temptations, and needs of our sisters in the South? I have, more than once met just this word, as I have urged these claims of the South upon us. It has the twang of the query of the oldest bad boy of Mother Eve: "Am I my brother's keeper"? After that, we seem to hear, chanting down through the centuries, the other song: "Whosoever giveth a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, in my name, shall in nowise lose his reward."

But we write to the young women of our country, born in this glorious morning hour of the new republic, who must press onward if that republic is to be saved for the noblest civilization possible to this new age. To these young women of the North, we say: These young women of the South, your sisters and mine, are now doing so much to help themselves, are working and reaching upward so bravely after the best, that it should bring a blush of shame to the brow of any woman or man to speak those careless or cruel words that so easily fall from thoughtless or heated lips. Leave to the machine politician, to the narrow sectarian churchman, to whoever has neither interest nor ambition above the miserable petting of self, the poor amusement of bluffing sweet charity and heavenly justice with arguments like these. Leave to the soulless satellite of fashion, to the stolid herd mired in gross comfort and smothered in stupid content in handsome environment, the conviction that the chief end of the woman of the upper class in America is to build a little social paradise, fence it in with a high hedge, and put a snapping terrier at the gate — leave it to such to go their way with this poor apology for not hearing a divine call. But let the young sisterhood that lives for what is the highest and wisest and holiest, make haste over the borderland, bearing gifts of love and hope and good cheer to the thousands who are only awaiting their coming to run forward with welcome in their outspread hands, and thanksgiving in their overflowing hearts that, after a forty years' wandering of the fathers and mothers through a wilderness of blind contention closed by desolating war, we, their sons and daughters, find ourselves, at last, on the other side of Jordan, to abide together in the promised land. Believe nobody who declares that the young women of the South are haters of their country; enemies of the North, proud and disdainful of the sympathy of good American people anywhere. There is nothing between the young women of the North and South save their ignorance of each other, and the difficulty of getting hold of each others' hands. If a thousand of the better sort of girls from Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas could live for three summer months with a thousand of a similar class from Massachusetts, Ohio, and California, there would be a thousand new friendships and a rush of letters, North and South, which would wake up the drowsiest postmaster at the cross-roads, and bring two thousand fine fellows to the "anxious seat," with inquiring minds concerning their sister's new dearest friends. There is no duty or privilege more imperative or inviting for the well-to-do young women of our northern states, than to put themselves in communication with their sisters in the South, by all the beautiful, beneficent devices so easy to any young woman really bent on having her own splendid will in her own womanly way.

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